

Reps. Waxman and Conyers reveal that U.S. Attorney offices across the nation are being undermined by attorney vacancies and lack of funding, with some offices facing shortages of even basic supplies, like binder clips and envelopes. In staff interviews, Assistant U.S. Attorneys reported that the problems are affecting the outcome of both criminal and civil cases.

In a letter to Attorney General Alberto Gonzales, the members describe widespread vacancies in attorney positions in U.S. Attorney offices in Los Angeles, Chicago, the District of Columbia, and elsewhere. They also disclose that many offices are being hampered by lack of basic supplies. Due to lack of funds, several U.S. Attorney offices are now forcing indigent defendants to pay for access to potentially exculpatory evidence.

The letter summarizes interviews with Assistant U.S. Attorneys and other information gathered from a dozen U.S. Attorney offices around the nation. The attorneys report that the staffing and funding shortages are causing fraud cases to be neglected, tempting prosecutors to compromise on plea bargains, and preventing U.S. Attorney offices from pursuing monetary claims owed to the government.

### Documents and Links

- [Letter to Attorney General Gonzales](#)